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*Governor*  
**Rick Homans**  
*Cabinet Secretary*

STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
**Taxation and Revenue Department**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Rio Rancho Man Guilty of Fraud, Conspiracy and Tax Evasion Charges Stemming from Racehorse Sales Scheme, Sentenced to Four Years**

BERNALILLO – Rio Rancho resident Billy Sanchez pleaded guilty to 20 counts of fraud, 1 count of conspiracy and 1 count of tax evasion in a plea agreement accepted by Thirteenth Judicial District Court Judge George Eichwald on Wednesday, July 8, 2009. Eichwald sentenced Sanchez to four years incarceration followed by five years of probation, taking into consideration two prior felonies that placed Sanchez in the habitual offender status.

"Mr. Sanchez has acknowledged his guilt and he will face serious consequences for his actions," said Rick Homans, Taxation and Revenue Department Cabinet Secretary.

Sanchez was behind a fraudulent sales scheme that involved the sale of racehorses that he did not own. The scheme continued for over three years, involved more than 20 victims and Sanchez fraudulently obtained approximately \$183,000 as a result. As previously reported, one of the racehorses that Sanchez attempted to sell had been euthanized, according to the actual owner of the horse.

Sanchez and his wife, Rosalie Trujillo, were arrested in Las Vegas, Nevada in June 2008. Sanchez has been on a \$50,000 cash-only bond since that time. In separate indictments, Sanchez and Trujillo were charged in July 2008. The District Attorney's Office decided to dismiss the charges on Trujillo in February 2009.

This investigation was conducted by the New Mexico Racing Commission, the Rio Rancho Police Department and the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department Tax Fraud Investigations Division and was prosecuted by District Attorney Lemuel Martinez's office of the Thirteenth Judicial District in Sandoval County. Martinez commented that the results of this investigation illustrate the benefits of various state agencies working together to accomplish a common goal.

To report suspected tax fraud against the State of New Mexico, call the Tax Fraud Hotline at 1-866-457-6789.

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